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Mixed Methods in Body and Embodiment Research

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Abstract
This chapter outlines the foundations of mixed methods research and discusses several examples of mixed methods research in the sociology of the body and embodiment. It begins with a brief history of mixed methods and conceptualizations of this term. To illustrate mixed methods in practice, including its benefits, drawbacks, and relevance to intersectionality research, the authors discuss the first author's research on body weight (Kwan 2007, 2009a, 2009b, 2010; Kwan and Graves 2013), as well as a study about young women's contraceptive use (England et al. 2016) and a study about nude embodiment (Weinberg and Williams 2010). The chapter concludes by discussing the future of mixed methods for sociologists of the body and embodiment, maintaining that mixed methods would serve well scholars who desire to understand embodiment-related trends in a population, as well as experiences of lived embodiment.

Keywords: mixed methods, multimethods, triangulation, complementarity, mixed methods development, sociology of the body, embodiment, intersectionality

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The blurring of the quantitative-qualitative divide is a unique feature of twenty-first-century research (Denzin and Lincoln 2018). A distinct third methodological movement or paradigm—mixed methods—now brings together both qualitative and quantitative research (Johnson and Onwuegbuzie 2004; Tashakkori and Teddlie 2010). While rates of published work using mixed methods vary across disciplines (Alise and Teddlie 2010), researchers have documented a steady increase in mixed methods publications (Ivankova and Kawamura 2010). A push from funding agencies, evaluators, and other stakeholders to use mixed methods to explore social policies may account for their increased use (Hesse-Biber 2014).

Researchers who use mixed methods ostensibly do so because of their value. A core assumption is that it increases the credibility of research because "the weaknesses in each single method will be compensated by the counter-balancing strengths of another" (Jick 1979, 604). Methodologists point out that quantitative research is weak in understanding context and setting, as well as giving voice to participants—purported strengths of qualitative research (Creswell and Plano Clark 2011). At the same time, they express concerns that qualitative research is interpretive and has small nonprobability samples that lead to ungeneralizable findings—purported shortcomings quantitative research (based on probability sampling) addresses (Creswell and Plano Clark 2011). The use of mixed methods thus allows researchers to offset weaknesses, leading to results that provide a better understanding of a research problem (Plano Clark and Ivankova 2016). As such, it can serve as an important tool for body scholars, especially those attuned to a multiplicative understanding of embodied experiences.

In this chapter, we share the basic concepts associated with mixed methods research. We hope this primer will assist scholars in determining the value of mixed methods for their own projects. We begin with a brief history and how leading methodologists conceptualize this term. To illustrate mixed methods in practice, including its benefits, drawbacks, and relevance to intersectionality research, we turn to the first author's research on body weight (Kwan 2007, 2009a, 2009b, 2010; Kwan and Graves 2013). We then consider two additional studies that examine social processes related to the body and employ mixed methods—England and colleagues' (2016) study on young women's contraceptive use, and Weinberg and Williams's (2010) study on

nude embodiment. We select these cases to illustrate further the range of applications of mixed methods research.

We conclude that, while mixed methods research comes in different forms, this research exhibits a common goal. On the one hand, researchers use quantitative methods to document specific statistical, including causal or correlational, trends in a population. On the other hand, they use qualitative methods to illuminate multidimensional social experiences and to show linkages in social processes. Investigating how various social categories intersect simultaneously to shape identity and experiences of the body demands qualitative methods. Thus, if researchers of the body desire to describe embodiment-related characteristics in a population, as well as thoroughly understand lived experiences of embodiment, then mixed methods would serve them well.

A Brief History

Methodological paradigm wars began around the 1980s (Teddlie and Tashakkori 2003). Critical theorists, among others, began to attack the objectivity-driven positivism paradigm (Gage 1989; Johnson and Onwuegbuzie 2004) that dominated the methodological landscape of the social sciences since the 1930s (Crothers and Platt 2010). It was about this time that qualitative approaches grew in popularity (Meriam and Tisdell 2016). The emergence of grounded theory (see Glaser and Strauss 1967) also provided a new epistemological foundation for qualitative research.

While purists on both sides of the quantitative-qualitative divide espoused the incompatibility thesis—that is, that the two paradigms are so philosophically, epistemologically, and methodologically different they should not be blended—advocates of the third paradigm were more flexible, maintaining both approaches are useful to social inquiry (Howe 1988; Johnson and Onwuegbuzie 2004). Interestingly, some argue that what might be labeled mixed methods research today has occurred for almost a century. For example, in the 1920s, Chicago School case studies of inner-city urban life involved both qualitative and quantitative methods (see Hesse-Biber 2014). Pelto (2015) contends that this early research was not labeled mixed methods because the quantitative-qualitative divide was "generally not significant or special. They were all doing 'science'" (741).

Conceptualizing Mixed Methods

Today researchers use a number of terms to describe studies characteristic of this third methodological movement, including *blended research*, *integrative research*, *multimethods*, and *mixed research.* The oft-cited term *triangulation* refers to "the combination of methodologies in the study of the same phenomenon" (Denzin 1978, 291). According to Denzin (1978), triangulation can occur within-methods, when a researcher uses multiple techniques that are either quantitative *or* qualitative to collect and interpret data. In contrast, between-method triangulation uses both quantitative *and* qualitative methods. However, the literature indicates strong agreement that mixed methods contains both quantitative and qualitative elements (Johnson, Onwuegbuzie, and Turner 2007). Hence, "mixed methods" typically refers to between-method rather than within-methods blending; the latter is often termed "multimethods" or "multiple methods."

Conceptualizations of mixed methods research further differentiate the extent to which a study has more quantitative or qualitative leanings. Mixed methods research can be categorized along a continuum (Johnson et al. 2007). At the two poles are Pure Qualitative and Pure Quantitative, with Pure Mixed as a midway point. Between Pure Qualitative and Pure Mixed lies Qualitative Mixed (*qualitative dominant*), and between Pure Mixed and Pure Quantitative lies Quantitative Mixed (*quantitative dominant*).

Notably, much body scholarship that involves more than one method would be labeled multimethods and qualitative dominant. This is likely because sociologists in this subfield often endeavor to capture the rich and multifaceted elements of lived embodiment. This goal necessarily involves qualitative methods such as participant observation in a natural setting or in-depth qualitative interviews to capture life narratives. To be sure, there are many examples of multisited ethnographies, along with studies that blend participant observations, interviews, and qualitative analysis of text. These include Casper and Moore's (2009) study of missing bodies, Han's research (2015) on gay Asian men, Talley's (2014) research on facial cosmetic surgery, and Whitesel's (2014) research on fat gay men. Here, researchers' use of multiple qualitative methods, as well as secondary statistical data, enables them to paint a vivid picture of embodied lives.

Another consideration is when or how mixing occurs. Creswell (2015) identifies three basic mixed methods designs that acknowledge research purpose, as well as the timing of mixing. In a *convergent design*, a researcher collects and analyzes quantitative and qualitative data and then merges the results with the purpose of comparison. In contrast, *sequential designs* exhibit more clearly distinct phases. In an *explanatory sequential design* a researcher begins with quantitative methods and then turns to qualitative methods to help explain in greater depth the quantitative results. In an *exploratory sequential design*, a researcher first explores a little understood problem with qualitative methods. They then use these findings to design a second quantitative phase, which is then implemented in a third data collection and analysis phase (Creswell 2015).

For example, in the work we examine more closely in this chapter, Weinberg and Williams's (2010) wave-one research phase involves the collection of closed and open-ended data, thereby exhibiting characteristics of a convergent design. Kwan's (2007) use of qualitative interviews in part to make sense of survey data among a population exhibits characteristics of an explanatory sequential design. Finally, England et al.'s (2016) study, where they first conducted qualitative interviews and then created quantitative data, can be characterized in part as a sequential design.

These are only a few key distinctions in conceptualizing mixed methods. There is ample debate about mixed methods typologies (see Guest 2012), along with what philosophy of science best partners with mixed methods research (e.g., Kroos 2012). In light of these multiple conceptualizations, Mertens and colleagues (2016) aptly maintain that mixed methods are "practiced in many different ways, under different names and/or without definition as such at all, in different disciplines and countries" (4).

Mixed Methods in the Sociology of the Body and Embodiment

Since the 1980s, the sociology of body and embodiment subfield has seen parallel growth alongside studies on gender, sexuality, intersectionality, and feminism (Shilling 2007). According to Shilling (2007), growing interest in the body was influenced by multiple factors,

including new meanings about personal consumption, the rise of second wave feminism, and technological advances that contributed to uncertainty about the body. Specifically, the subfield developed in the last 40 years in part because of the need to interrogate a number of dualisms within sociology and to uncover body-relevant work within the sociological tradition. Indeed, the body was recognized in and of itself as a legitimate object of sociological inquiry. Today, as scholars have observed (e.g., Adelman and Ruggi 2012), the subfield cuts across disciplinary boundaries, exhibiting diversity in philosophical, empirical, and methodological approaches. Scholars of embodiment today examine a plethora of topics, including disability, sport, body size, health, and sexuality, using an array of methods.

Mixed methods can provide scholars an important tool for understanding embodied lives. The use of quantitative methods, such as a survey with, say, a probability sample, enables researchers to document broader statistical (including causal or correlational) trends in a population, whether these trends are about the use of cesarean section delivery rates in United States by race, ethnicity, and socioeconomic status (e.g., Roth and Henley 2012) or correlates of aging women's attitudes toward cosmetic surgery (e.g., Slevec and Tiggemann 2010). At the same time, the use of qualitative methods enables researchers of the body to flesh out lived embodiment practices and social-psychological processes. For example, qualitative analysis of open-ended questions about cesarean deliveries documents the distressing nature of these surgeries on women's psychological well-being, thereby paving the way for new policies to improve women's satisfaction with birthing (Porter et al. 2007). Similarly, qualitative interviews with women who have consciously opted in or opted out of cosmetic surgery take us beyond the numbers, revealing the life course circumstances that shape life-changing decisions about one's aging body (Brooks 2017). Combining quantitative and qualitative approaches potentially provides a more comprehensive picture, illuminating both population trends (and its correlates) and lived social experiences.

Although sociology has been slow to embrace mixed methods (Pearce 2012), there are nevertheless examples of mixed methods research in this subfield. To illustrate these methods in practice, we begin first with the first author's work on body weight.

Competing Cultural Meanings about the "Overweight" Body: Complementing, Triangulating, and Developing

The first author's dissertation project (Kwan 2007), as well as published work produced from dissertation data (e.g., Kwan 2009a, 2009b, 2010; Kwan and Graves 2013), explores the contested field of body weight and how individuals make sense of these contested meanings in their everyday lives. Specifically, Kwan's early research agenda addressed the following: How do cultural producers (who have a stake in public understandings about the body) frame messages about the "overweight" body?[1] Moreover, do these messages resonate, and what do these messages mean in everyday lives, particularly in the lives of people of size? She was interested in these questions because, as sociologists have established, many social issues involve framing competitions—struggles over the production of ideas and meanings (Benford and Snow 2000). Framers compete to have their version of reality become an authoritative version (Hilgartner and Bosk 1988). Moreover, as scholars have long pointed out, situations perceived as real are real in their consequences (Thomas and Thomas 1928).

To address her research questions, Kwan conducted *qualitative content analysis* of beauty and weight loss industry advertisements, public health fact sheets, organization websites, and more. This content analysis allowed her to document how cultural producers such as the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and the National Association to Advance Fat Acceptance promulgate cultural frames to shape public understandings of the overweight body. To understand the resonance of these frames, she conducted *quantitative surveys* (n = 456) with individuals of all body sizes. Finally, to understand the meanings of these cultural messages in the lives of those who are especially impacted by these messages, Kwan conducted *in-depth qualitative interviews* (n = 42) with individuals who self-identify as overweight.[2] Her research was especially attuned to intersections—how gender, race and ethnicity, class, and body size come together to shape bodily experiences.

Several motivations drove her use of mixed methods. These motivations reflect the benefits of mixed methods discussed in the literature. Specifically, methodologists document how mixed methods add value to projects through complementarity, triangulation, and development (see Collins, Onwuegbuzie, and Sutton 2006; Creswell and

Plano Clark 2011; Greene, Caracelli, and Graham 1989; Plano Clark and Ivankova 2016; Rossman and Wilson 1985; Sechrest and Sidana 1995; Small 2011). Because Kwan sought and received funding through a National Science Foundation (NSF) Doctoral Dissertation Improvement Grant, complementarity, triangulation, and development were intended to boost the research's credibility and, subsequently, funding appeal. Moreover, she was interested in understanding both general patterns about cultural frames (hence, the quantitative component), as well as the lived embodiment of individuals using an intersectional lens (hence, the qualitative component).

Complementarity

With complementarity, a researcher uses qualitative and quantitative methods to measure different facets of a phenomenon, resulting in an enriched understanding (Greene et al. 1989). For example, Plano Clark and Ivankova (2016) argue that researchers may need to use qualitative methods to explore a process and a complementary quantitative method to examine outcomes from that process. Or they may use quantitative methods to describe general trends about a social phenomenon and then turn to complementary qualitative methods to explicate these trends.

Kwan's core questions examine different aspects of a social phenomenon, necessitating the use of complementary methods. The first research question focuses mainly on cultural producers, while the second focuses mainly on cultural consumers. While Kwan's qualitative content analysis described the cultural logic of these frames and their discursive consequences, it did not reveal the meanings of these frames in everyday lives. Examining this required the use of additional methods. First, descriptive statistics and regression analysis of survey data enabled the documentation of how cultural frames work in a general population. The use of in-depth interviews then enabled explication of these trends by tapping into the meanings of these frames in the everyday lives of people of size.

Triangulation

Triangulation is about seeking "convergence, corroboration, [and] correspondence of results from the different methods" (Greene et al. 1989,

259). The logic is that comparing results from one method with another will result in more valid conclusions about the social phenomenon. For example, a researcher could compare the statistical findings obtained from a questionnaire with the themes arising from qualitative interviews. When there is agreement across these findings, researchers can be more confident about their results; when discrepancies emerge, they should take steps to reconcile their results (Creswell and Plano Clark 2011; Plano Clark and Ivankova 2016; Wagner et al. 2012).

To provide a simple illustration, Kwan (2009b) found that survey participants generally support free-market policies and an emphasis on personal responsibility consistent with the food industry frame. So, when asked about the use of warning labels to identify unhealthy foods taxes, 70.6 percent of survey participants agree with the use of these labels. Qualitative interviews shed light on the reasoning behind this number. In this case, they illustrate how labels might serve an effective deterrent function. As John, one interview participant, said: "That might not be a bad idea. The only reason why I say that is because for someone who does have a weight problem, it might guilt me into not eating, not taking the bite or whatever. Yeah, I could go for that I guess. It'd be kind of a humorous read [laughs]" (Kwan 2009b, 487). Here, qualitative data corroborate descriptive statistics, illustrating the preponderance of views in a large sample, as well as flesh out some of the meanings behind the numbers.

Development

Development occurs when researchers use the results from one method to develop or inform another (Plano Clark and Ivankova 2016). Here the use of mixed methods is sequential (Plano Clark and Ivankova 2016). As Greene and colleagues (1989) point out, development is broadly construed. A researcher could use information derived from one method to inform decisions at a second phase about, say, sampling, measurement, instrument development, or implementation. For example, a researcher could use the results of a quantitative survey to shape questions asked in a follow-up qualitative interview.

In Kwan's (2007) research, development occurred at two points. First, the initial qualitative content analysis laying out the cultural frames provided the foundation for developing both the survey questionnaire and the interview guide. Kwan needed an understanding of

the tenets and rhetorical devices deployed by each cultural producer to develop the survey and interview questions. Second, the quantitative surveys served as a qualitative interview recruitment tool. Specifically, the survey instrument was administered to undergraduate students at a public university and community college. The questionnaire contained closed-ended items that tapped into demographics, along with participants' perspectives on each frame. The final page of the survey asked participants if they would be willing to participate in a paid follow-up face-to-face interview. If so, they were instructed to provide their name and contact information. The governing Institutional Review Board approved the project so long as procedures protected the identity of survey participants. As such, Kwan removed the final page of the survey immediately upon survey data collection. She then securely stored these pages containing identifiers in a location separate from the survey data.

Intersections, Mixed Methods Research, and Lived Embodiment

Mixed methods research holds special promise for scholars interested in understanding intersections. Developed by black feminist scholars in the 1980s, intersectionality is a framework for understanding human experiences that moves beyond a single category of analysis such as race or class or gender (Collins 1990; Crenshaw 1989). It acknowledges that various social categories interact simultaneously to shape identity and experiences of oppression, domination, and privilege. This entails a rejection of an additive approach that assumes social inequality increases with the addition of each disadvantaged category. An intersectionality framework further assumes the constructed nature and fluidity of social categories, and it recognizes the dynamic role of social processes and structures at any particular time and place (see Hankivsky 2012).

Intersectionality research attempts to give voice to "the multidimensional lived experiences of people in the full context of their social lives" (Hankivsky and Grace 2015, 8; see also Choo and Ferree 2010 for a critique of this approach), and qualitative research is well suited to this goal. As Narvaez et al. write:

Open-ended qualitative approaches have strength when assessing processes and temporality and allowing respondents to talk about idiosyncratic identity constellations. Group-oriented techniques, such

as focus groups, and individualized techniques, such as in-depth interviews, life histories, personal narrative, and autoethnography, can capture, overall, the intersection of identities and their relationship to context. (2009, 4, citations removed)

Thus, not surprisingly, most intersectionality research to date has been qualitative (Choo and Ferree 2010; Hankivsky and Grace 2015; Hunting 2014). Indeed, as aforementioned, this holds true of the work in the sociology of the body, which exhibits strong qualitative leanings.

Returning to our first case study, because Kwan was interested in understanding how race, gender, and body size intersect to influence everyday experiences about body weight, her project required a qualitative component. Thus, she turned to qualitative interviews largely to understand meaning-making and how cultural frames shape the lives of individuals who self-identified as overweight. Simply put, survey methods are inadequate in attaining this goal. Moreover, she purposefully obtained a diverse interview sample comprised of 23 women and 19 men, about half of whom identified as white, about a quarter as Hispanic, and about 15 percent as African American. She also intentionally sought participants who might find it difficult for financial reasons to achieve aesthetic and health norms. Interview participants typically had annual household incomes less than $30,000.

Her analysis revealed that aesthetic body ideals impact everyday lives differently depending on social location. Specifically, it revealed a body privilege continuum distinctly patterned by gender and race. While almost all interview participants expressed a level of discomfort and body consciousness (i.e., awareness of nonconformity to hegemonic body norms) in public spaces (e.g., when using public transit or at work, school, or shopping), this was especially the case for white and Hispanic women. These women exhibited heightened body consciousness and, consequently, would implement a number of psychological and physical body management strategies to either cope or pass as thin (Kwan 2010). For example, Brittany, a 24-year-old Latina, described how she was so self-conscious about her body that she physically postured herself to minimize the fat under her chin. She shared: "In public situations, I'm really uncomfortable. I went with my boyfriend's family [to a restaurant] and I was just—Oh my God—you know, I'm sitting there and I had a little skirt on and a shirt. I sat up straight and I'd try and keep my head up so you can't see my chin. You know what I mean? So it's always there. It's always, always there!"

(Kwan 2010, 152). In contrast is Kirk's experience of body consciousness. He is 26 and white. He reflected on a shopping incident where he was unable to fit into a pair of size 44 pants. Here is how he reacted: "When have you ever gotten this mad about being the way you are? . . . Well, oh God, you're an idiot" (Kwan 2010, 154). Kirk stormed out of the store and vowed to be unapologetic about his size. White men and African American women, she found, are more alike insofar as they occupy one end of a body privilege continuum, while white and Hispanic women occupy the opposite end (for further details, see Kwan 2010). Only revealed through in-depth qualitative interviews and an intersectional approach to lived embodiment, Kwan's research illustrates how multiple social locations shape experiences of body consciousness, as well as the body management strategies that follow. She explains these counterintuitive findings in light of an intersectional approach that acknowledges male privilege and hegemonic masculinity, as well as more flexible conceptions of beauty in the black community (see Kwan 2010).

While lived embodiment and intersectionality are best captured through qualitative methods, it is important to point out that in recent years quantitative scholars have begun to apply an intersectionality framework (e.g., Dubrow 2008). Unlike traditional additive quantitative analysis that examines in isolation the effect of various identity measures such as race, gender, sex, income, and age on a social outcome, intersectionality-informed quantitative research does not consider identity categories mutually exclusive. A multiplicative approach, at a minimum, includes "two-way and three-way (or more) *interaction terms* of demographic categories to account for the conditional effects of intersecting categories on a social outcome" (Rouhani 2014, 3; see also Dubrow 2008). While the relationship between mixed methods and intersectionality is currently in its infancy stage (Hankivsky and Grace 2015), leading methodologists acknowledge: "Both methods are needed to produce a full and complete portrait of intersectionality, and to test its main assumptions" (Dubrow 2013, 164). For this reason, among other theoretical reasons, Kwan included interaction terms in her regression analyses.

Drawbacks and Challenges of Mixed Methods Research

While mixed methods provide researchers the ability to enrich, corroborate, and raise the credibility of their findings, researchers using mixed methods face a number of unique challenges. The first challenge is a matter of skill. As Creswell and Plano Clark (2011) maintain, researchers should have a firm grasp of the logic of hypothesis testing, the use and interpretation of statistics, issues of reliability, validity, experimental control, and generalizability. They also recommend that researchers have the ability to pose qualitative meaning-oriented research questions, consider participants as experts, code and interpret qualitative data, and understand issues of credibility, trustworthiness, and common validation strategies. Simply put, a mixed methods researcher must be competent in the logic and execution of both methods. Second, mixed methods can involve substantial expenses. Researchers should be prepared, for instance, to acquire both statistical and qualitative software programs, compensate both survey and interview participants, print quantitative surveys, and transcribe qualitative interviews. Finally, scholars often work with tight timelines. Given dissertation deadlines, the tenure clock, and publication goals, the time required to conduct thoroughly a mixed methods study may not always be feasible.

These considerations were real in Kwan's project. Because the graduate program she was matriculating in focused mainly on quantitative methods, Kwan sought additional training in qualitative methods by participating in American Sociological Association didactic seminars on qualitative research, as well as training on Atlas.ti—a workbench for qualitative data analysis. She was grateful to receive NSF funds that enabled the purchasing of this software and the funding of several full-day training workshops. NSF funds further enabled her to compensate interview participants and transcribers. This sped up the recruitment process and reduced the data preparation time. Kwan admits that completing a mixed methods dissertation in light of graduation deadlines and a pending tenure track job created inordinate pressure. As such, she cautions others to consider seriously the time commitment involved with a mixed methods study.

Efficacy and Contraceptive Use: Making Quantitative Data out of Qualitative Interviews

We now turn to two additional studies to illustrate further the use of mixed methods. Both studies may be useful to body scholars because they not only show the application of mixed methods, but because the topics studied are particularly touchy or uncomfortable—often the case with body-related topics. Moreover, both studies illustrate well the use of mixed methods to understand causal or correlational statistical trends about the body, alongside elements of lived embodiment. In both studies, quantitative and qualitative data come together to create a more comprehensive picture of embodied lives.

The first study by England and colleagues (2016) examines why unmarried women in their 20s who do not want to get pregnant are inconsistent with contraceptive use, and the role of efficacy in this process. In their sequential design, they first conducted qualitative interviews (n = 99) with women on four college campuses. They then numerically coded their interview data into quantitative data using textual fields in NVivo—a software program that supports qualitative and mixed methods research.

Their main independent variable—a three-category efficacy scale (low, medium, and high)—came from their coded transcripts of interview participants' self-reported behaviors such as planfulness, self-regulation, assertiveness, and belief in the ability to take action that affects outcomes (unrelated to contraceptive use). The authors give an example of "high" efficacy if a woman worked ahead in school, did not procrastinate, confidently addressed topics other than contraception with partners and friends, and had a positive outlook toward achieving goals (6–7). The opposite received a "low" efficacy score. They also created a dichotomous contraceptive consistency variable based on whether or not a participant indicated in her interview that every act of intercourse was protected. Along with these independent and dependent variables, the researchers coded socio-demographics such as class and race, as well as partnership characteristics such as partnership length and cohabitation.

Their logistic regression results show a statistically significant relationship between high efficacy and the likelihood of consistent contraceptive use. In their full statistical models, England et al. (2016)

find that, compared to women with low efficacy, women with high efficacy are five to eight times more likely to use contraception consistently. These models also find no significant relationship between class and consistent contraceptive use. An unweighted full model (that gives every partnership the same importance regardless of length), however, reveals differences by race. Specifically, compared to black women, white women and women of other races are about twice as likely to use contraception consistently. Such findings allow for theorizing about the relationship between efficacy and the body, such as how low efficacy may lead to pregnancy due to lower likelihood of consistent contraceptive use.

England and colleagues use their initial qualitative data to highlight the "linkages between efficacy and consistent contraception work" (2016, 10). In this way, mixed methods serve an offsetting function in their study; they use the strengths of qualitative data to expound social lives and processes—something quantitative data are incapable of doing. That is, the researchers turn to qualitative interviews to capture lived embodiment. For example, they describe the case of Carolina, a young Latina from a working-class background who reports three pregnancies. Carolina exhibits low efficacy and inconsistent contraceptive use. Regarding the use of condoms, she admits: "I think the first couple of times we were [using] and after that it all kind of left" (England et al. 2016, 10). In reference to the pill, she concedes, "I wasn't really good at taking it" (England et al. 2016, 10). England et al. point out further evidence of Carolina's lack of efficacy. She discloses that her study habits are "really bad" and that "I don't think there's a right time for anything: it's just—it happens . . . because . . . it's gonna happen . . . I'm not a person that really like tries to plan that far ahead because you never know what happens" (England et al. 2016, 10). In contrast to those with low efficacy, England and colleagues use qualitative interviews to show the link between high planfulness and self-regulation (indicators of efficacy) and contraceptive consistency. For example, they describe the case of Jane, a young queer-identified, middle-class Asian attending Stanford who studies for exams over 3 days in advance and always uses the pill or condoms (or both) with her male partner.

Overall, the use of mixed methods by England et al. sheds light on how the organization of social lives (efficacy) affects the body

(consistent contraceptive use). The authors' construction of an efficacy scale via qualitative data put both methodological approaches in conversation with each other and allowed for nuanced results that may not have been produced otherwise. Interestingly, England et al. use their qualitative data for a further purpose—to make sense of negative cases. Thus, they use mixed methods not only to help develop the quantitative portion of their study and to provide details about contraceptive use in the lives of women who are differentially socially located, but also to explain findings that contradict their high efficacy–high contraceptive consistency thesis. For example, they discuss how two black students at Stanford from poor backgrounds exhibit efficacy in academic matters, but they do not use condoms consistently because their partners do not like the physical feel of them. In this way, mixed methods can also help researchers make sense of discrepant findings.

Nude Embodiment: Closed and Open-Ended Questionnaire Items

Unlike England et al. (2016) who use qualitative data to develop quantitative measures, Weinberg and Williams (2010) collect mixed methods data in two distinct phases to understand how feelings about nude embodiment affect sexual intimacy and pleasure. In wave one, Weinberg and Williams invited participants for a personal interview, collecting both closed and open-ended data (n = 121).

Their initial analysis of wave-one data revealed a relationship between discomfort with nudity and sexual inhibitions. This prompted the researchers to conduct a second wave of data collection consisting of two short self-administered, open-ended questions. They asked participants to describe how they felt about being nude in the presence of others, as well as the effect of these feelings on what they would like, or not like, sexually. Second-wave data collection resulted in 63 additional participants (total n = 184).

From the first wave of data collection, the researchers created a "comfort-with-being-nude" scale. This first-of-its-kind scale consisted of items that evaluated participant comfort level (from not uncomfortable to very comfortable) in a variety of situations someone

might find themselves naked in front of others (e.g., being examined by a doctor, posing nude for an art class, or being at a nude beach). They also used closed-ended items to create sexual profiles of participants.

Weinberg and Williams (2010) present their statistical findings (by gender) mainly in the form of beta weights. They find that, over their lifetime, higher positive nude embodiment scores for women are statistically related to the higher frequency of, among other things, self-masturbation, performing and receiving oral-genital activity, and coitus. For men, the quantitative data point to a relationship between the degree of comfort with nude embodiment and a positive evaluation of a variety of sexual practices, such as watching others have sex, using a vibrator on a partner, and having less guilt over self-masturbation. However, Weinberg and Williams find no statistically significant relationship between nude embodiment and actual sexual behaviors among men, as they find for the subsample of women. Their quantitative data thus allowed them to describe sexual behaviors among a population and differentiate statistically comparison groups (in this case, by gender).

They then use qualitative data to support their survey responses, "which, in addition, elaborated the link between their experience of nude embodiment and subsequent sexual pleasure" (Weinberg and Williams 2010, 55). For example, one woman comments on how comfort with her nude body allows to her to produce sexual pleasure: "Since I am comfortable with my body and being nude, I can focus on other things rather than worrying about being nude. For example, when having sex I do not feel like I need to stay under a sheet or blanket to cover my body, which would limit you to only a couple of positions" (Weinberg and Williams 2010, 56). They also use qualitative data to corroborate the statistical finding that nude embodiment for men is not related to actual sexual practices. As one male participant plainly put it, "I've never had sexual experiences where I felt pressure that I was being judged about my body" (Weinberg and Williams 2010, 61). In sum, Weinberg and Williams use open-ended questionnaires, which allow for richer data collection about sensitive topics such as nudity, to enhance the credibility of, as well as elaborate upon, their quantitative findings.

Moving Forward

Despite an increase in rates of published articles that involve mixed methods (Ivankova and Kawamura 2010), rates of published research using mixed methods in sociology remains low. A study by Alise and Teddlie (2010) suggests that the prevalence rate for pure disciplines such as sociology is about 6 percent, compared to 16 percent in applied disciplines such as nursing. Pearce's (2012) review of the top-three sociology journals and two sociology methods journals between 1990 and 2010 found only three items that used the term *mixed method*. However, she did find 27 articles using both qualitative and quantitative data where the authors did not identify their research as a mixed methods study. Ironically, this lack of mixed methods research in sociology exists alongside an abundance of sociological research falling under the multimethods label.

England et al.'s (2016) conversion of qualitative data to quantitative is instructive of how researchers can innovate in their mixed methods designs. The coding of qualitative data for future Qualitative Comparative Analysis also provides another window of opportunity (see Ragin 2014). Kazyak et al. (2016) do what might be described as a reverse of England et al.'s strategy by creating narratives from quantitative data using a technique they label "survey-driven narrative construction." New cross-platform applications such as NVivo and Dedoose can further expand data analysis possibilities, while the use of online methods to understand social life provides a new spin to this third methodological movement (see Hesse-Biber and Griffin 2013 on the benefits of going online). Notably, while there seems to be a draw toward the quantitative survey-qualitative interviews combination, researchers can blend a range of methods such as experimental design, audit studies, sequence analysis, quantitative and qualitative content analysis, observational and participatory methods, and more. While all these approaches are relevant to scholars regardless of the area of sociology, they may be especially helpful to scholars of the body who examine sensitive topics (such as disability, sexuality, and health-related matters), as the phenomenon of inquiry is broached from various vantage points.
In close, we encourage researchers of the body who desire to describe specific embodiment-related characteristics and processes in

a population, as well as thoroughly understand lived experiences of embodiment, to consider mixed methods (and to identify their work as such). After several decades, mixed methods designs are now well developed, yet they remain an untapped tool for scholars to better understand body politics.

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Notes

1 Overweight is in quotes in its first usage (in the main text) to reflect the contested nature of the term. In public health discourses, it is a medical category; however, the term holds multiple, including stigmatized, meanings (e.g., Wann 1998).

2 I (the first author) conducted interviews face to face and thus my positionality and embodied subjectivity at the time of the research are noteworthy. Specifically, I am a visible ethnic minority of East Asian descent. I am thin by cultural standards with a youthful appearance. I dressed conservatively when I met with participants (i.e., in middle-class business attire). While I do not share the corporeal embodiment of my participants, I do not think my embodied subjectivity posed a validity threat to data collection. I clearly communicated to participants my role as a nonjudgmental active listener. Many of my interviews were longer than 2 hours, suggesting participants felt comfortable. Moreover, several men explicitly thanked me for the opportunity to discuss body weight—a topic that is often seen as exclusively women's terrain. I readily acknowledge my body privilege and have written about this topic (see Kwan 2010). Indeed, I approach my research from a constructionist standpoint, acknowledging that meanings about body weight are historically, geographically, and contextually contingent. Moreover, I recognize that power infuses social relationships and that social constructions ultimately shape how individuals see themselves, act, and make life decisions.